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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 0599  
RUEPGDA/USEUCOM JIC VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000387

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY  
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER  
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ  
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, AF/EX, DS/IP/OPO, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/14/2016  
TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: HOSTAGE-TAKING, SITREP # 25

REF: LAGOS 383

Classified By: Acting Political/Economic Chief Shannon Ross  
for reasons 1.4 (D/E).

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Hostage Welfare Update  
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¶1. (C) Shell provided a statement from the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) e-mailed to their journalist contact, which indicated that the hostages were split for strategic reasons, and their condition was no longer a concern for the hostage-takers. The statement promised further attacks, warned ex-patriates to leave, and said that there were no plans to execute hostages unless the Nigerian military "did something stupid." The statement also claimed the militants were not in negotiation with any government group. FEST Officer expressed concerns for the hostages' welfare to Delta State Secretary to the State Government (SSG) Uduaghan, who said that he still believed the release would occur tonight or tomorrow night and that, if the hostages were split up, it was only to insure the militants' safety. (Note: This is Delta State's first admission, albeit tacit, that the hostages are being used as human shields. End Note.)

¶2. (C) Willbros said Macon Hawkins is scheduled for an interview with two CNN reporters at 11:30am Central Standard Time. CNN had not promised air time or a specific time slot.

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Hostage Negotiations  
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¶3. (C) Delta SSG Uduaghan said Oboko Bello and three other youths who attended yesterday's Ijaw Youth Forum were on their way to the creeks to deliver the communique. The communique lists 11 specific failings of the GON to address Ijaw problems and 9 general demands, the last of which is a weak appeal for the release of the hostages. FEST officer James Webster spoke with Bello, who confirmed he was on the way and directed Webster to call later.

¶4. (C) Another source indicated the GON had directed the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to initiate specific development programs in the Gbaramatu area, and would publicly announce the plan shortly.

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Energy Update  
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¶5. (C) Shell denied media reports that an attack on one of their Bayelsa facilities occurred last night. Willbros said they expect some difficulties with a planned reduction in force at their Choba facility from 1800 local employees to ¶1400. They are currently renegotiating a contract with the junior oil workers' union, NUPENG, which has not confirmed any plan of action.

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Military Update  
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¶6. (C) There are no significant updates.

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Media Update  
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¶7. (SBU) Journalists from the Associated Press and the Vanguard, a local newspaper, published their conversations with AmCit Cody Oswalt last night. The reports were consistent with Conoff's conversation last night.

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Consular Update  
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¶8. (C) There have been no reports of additional attacks on AmCits. One mission Conoff and one FEST member are in Warri monitoring negotiations and prepared to assist with repatriation. The UK also has a consular officer in Warri to monitor negotiations and assist with repatriation. The head of Shell Security is on standby for repatriation assistance.  
HOWE